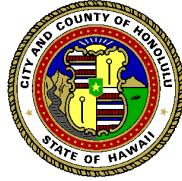


HONOLULU FIRE COMMISSION  
**CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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CHARLOTTE NEKOTA  
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MAX HANNEMANN

DENNIS MORTON

WILLIAM HONG

STEFANIE SAKAMOTO LEE

NICHOLAS TEVES

Minutes of Regular Public Meeting  
Honolulu Fire Department Headquarters  
Honolulu Fire Department Auditorium  
Wednesday, June 17, 2020

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Nagamine called the regular meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Craig Nagamine, Charlotte Nekota, Max Hannemann, Dennis Morton, William Hong, Stefanie Lee and Nicholas Teves.

IN ATTENDANCE: Fire Chief Manuel Neves (HFD), Deputy Fire Chief Lionel Camara, Jr. (HFD), Assistant Fire Chief Ron Rico (HFD), Assistant Fire Chief Scott Lawton (HFD), Assistant Fire Chief Socrates Bratakos (HFD), Brian Ancheta (Corporation Counsel), and Nadine Murata.

Chair Nagamine asked staff to take their mask off when speaking so voices can be clearly recorded.

II. PUBLIC TESTIMONY. Chair Nagamine asked if there was anyone from the public who wished to give public testimony. There was none.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF MAY 20, 2020. Chair Nagamine called for any comments or corrections to the minutes of the regular public meeting of May 20, 2020. Commissioner Lee moved and Commissioner Morton seconded. There being no further comments or corrections and with a unanimous vote in favor, the Commission approved the minutes.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES OF MAY 20, 2020. Chair Nagamine called for any comments or corrections to the minutes of the executive session meeting of May 20, 2020. Commissioner Lee moved and Commissioner Morton seconded. There being no further comments or corrections and with a unanimous vote in favor, the Commission approved the executive session minutes.

V. REPORT OF THE FIRE CHIEF. Fire Chief Neves passed out copies of his May 2020 monthly report and highlighted the following:

A. Major Incidents.

1. Fires. Fire Chief Neves went over major incidents with the Commission and highlighted a few. Details can be found in the monthly report.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned there were 6 fire incidents for the month of May and mentioned fires have been intentionally set (incendiary/arson).

Fire Chief Neves mentioned that charging devices and arcing are a concern and electrical outlets should be checked by a licensed electrician should they become hot. (Residents should regularly feel the outside for heat, especially if the house is older).

2. Rescues. Fire Chief Neves went over rescues with the Commission. Details can be found in the monthly report.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned that the department recovered the remains of the missing hiker on the Pupukea trail.

3. Hazardous Conditions. Fire Chief Neves mentioned the department continues to respond to weather related emergencies.

B. Equipment Status.

Five frontline apparatuses and two auxiliary vehicle were out of service.

C. Vacancies. Fire Chief Neves went over vacancies with the Commission.

Fire Chief Neves went over May's vacancies for Fire Fighter (FF) I, FF II's, FF III's, and Captains within the department.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned currently there are 60 vacancies within the department and a new class will be starting in October with 24 recruits.

D. Injuries- Report of Industrial Injury or Illness (ISWC). Fire Chief Neves briefly went over injuries with the Commission. Details can be found in the monthly report.

E. Grievances. Fire Chief Neves went over grievance with the Commission. Details can be found in the monthly report.

Fire Chief also reported on the following:

1. During the month of May, HFD received 4 pieces of complimentary correspondence and 1 complaint and the complaint involved maintenance of a park that is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Parks and Recreation, not HFD. Details are in the monthly report.
2. Fire Chief Neves mentioned that the department continues to respond to 50 - 70 COVID-19 cases every day.
3. Fire Chief Neves went over City Bill 14 (2020). Relating to Firefighters and Emergency Rescue operations, with the Commission, and mentioned that the setup of a rescue squad on the Windward side has been in the works for about 3 – 4 years.

Fire Chief Neves went over the time line for the opening of the rescue squad and mentioned that it is identified in the department's accreditation as a deficiency.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned that some felt the timeline for personnel was too aggressive.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned that the department received funding for its buildings, vehicles, permits and positions for FY 2020.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned the department opposes Bill 14 since under separation of powers, the City's executive branch should have authority over staffing, and the department has been testifying against it. If passed, it will change the Revised Ordinances of Honolulu.

4. Fire Chief Neves mentioned that there is a resolution to rename Hale Kinai Ahi.

Fire Chief Neves asked if there were any questions.

Vice-Chair Nekota asked about rescues and if the department uses drones.

Chief Camara answered that the department uses drones during certain instances.

Chief Camara mentioned for safety reasons Air 1 does not want drones being deployed in the same area as they interfere with searching and can collide with helicopters and cause crashes.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned the departments drones are used for other administrative purposes.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned drones are used for fire investigations for an overall view.

Vice-Chair Nekota asked whether drones were used to search for the missing hiker. Chief Camara said that a defect in the drone used resulted in a crash near Waimea Bay.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned that drones are still in a pilot program due to privacy issues, and that the department is developing standard operation procedures (SOPs).

Commissioner Lee asked if the department has met with Councilmember Waters regarding Bill 14, since he introduced the bill.

Fire Chief Neves answered yes.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned that Chief Samala met with Councilmember Waters when the bill was in draft form and was hopeful that the bill will be revised to incorporate the department's recommendations.

Commissioner Lee asked if the Captains were involved in the development of the plan.

Fire Chief Neves answered yes.

Commissioner Morton asked if the bill contradicts to job descriptions and job requirements for the rescue.

Fire Chief Neves went over the requisite training description with the Commission.

Commissioner Hannemann asked if the union has taken a position with the department.

Fire Chief Neves answered yes and their concern is the safety of the fire fighters as well as the public.

Commissioner Lee asked if the bill passes what is the outcome.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned that there would be no standard separation of powers when it comes to law. Chief Camara added that the department needs more flexibility in shifting Rescue funding allocations to other areas, unlike what is stated in the bill.

Commissioner Hannemann asked if there were any more COVID cases within the department.

Fire Chief Neves answered no, that there were only the 2 cases early on.

Commissioner Hannemann asked whether any self-assessment for COVID was being done. Fire Chief Neves and Chief Camara said yes, the department has self-assessment forms.

Commissioner Morton asked if the training requirements are increased for Rescue, will the department have a hard time filling those spots. Fire Chief Neves said he did not know, but the current interest in Rescue is very low.

Commissioner Hong asked about jet skis and why they are no longer being used by HFD. Fire Chief Neves said in 2013 (peak use), HFD had 10 jet skis; but the skill level on those vehicles just could not be as good as HFD wanted, given the amount of water time needed to develop those skills. In addition, he said the jet skis don't have lights for night work. So HFD has instead been working with Ocean Safety for the past 2 – 3 years, since there's a lot of overlap in their operations. Commissioner Hong said lights can be attached to jet skis, and that he has been rescued by jet skis in the past.

Handouts were passed out by Fire Chief Neves regarding current operations of the Ocean Safety rescue program, and said that HFD was just duplicating a lot of Ocean Safety work. Since HFD did not have the budget to build up the jet ski skill level time in, they are now relying more on Ocean Safety.

Commissioner Hong and Commissioner Morton voiced their concerns about not using jet skis. Chief Camara said HFD has helicopter pilots to cover the ocean areas as needed. Commissioner Hong said he had seen the helicopters in his area all out, and not jet ski coverage to make up the difference. Fire Chief Neves noted that Ocean Safety's main job is to provide such coverage, and HFD's handling of water emergencies is very broad.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned that the department is looking at alternatives that will not take away from its core mission. Commissioner Hong said he appreciated HFD doing that research.

Fire Chief Neves had each member of the executive staff give a brief description of their sections' recent activities.

Deputy Fire Chief Lionel Camara, Jr.- Chief Camara briefly went over the FY 2021 Budget with the Commission.

Chief Camara mentioned that the department's budget has remained on track with a 2% increase and is moving forward.

Chief Camara mentioned the CIP had a 16% increase, with Councilmember Waters giving \$4.2 million for the planning, design and construction of the Olomana Fire Station to house Rescue 3. This is a Council add, subject to change by the Mayor.

Chief Camara asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Assistant Fire Chief Ron Rico- Fire Operation. Chief Rico gave an update on fire operations activities due to COVID-19.

Chief Rico informed the Commission that the department has resumed preplanning and inspections, now that the COVID-19 shutdown was being lifted somewhat.

Chief Rico mentioned stations are still not welcoming visitors or families to the sites and face coverings are required.

Commissioner Morton asked whether about preplanning systems were now installed on vehicles.

Chief Rico answered yes, addresses will automatically pop up.

Assistant Fire Chief Scott Lawton- Administrative Services. Chief Lawton explained the normalization of staffing measures in the administrative services bureau and at the Waipahu maintenance facility.

Chief Lawton mentioned that in March the department had a reduction in physically present staff of 50%, where 50% reported to work and the other 50% did telework from home on a rotation basis.

Chief Lawton mentioned on June 1<sup>st</sup> everyone was brought back with safety measures in place.

Chief Lawton mentioned that the department encourages the use of mask and social distancing.

Assistant Fire Chief Socrates Bratakos- Planning and Development. Chief Bratakos gave the Commission an update on the 1046 Young Street property, by Thomas Square.

Chief Bratakos mentioned that this 30,000 square foot property is currently owned by the City and it was previously occupied by DOE but HFD was working with DOE on DOE's move-out.

Chief Bratakos mentioned that the department's planning section has moved in with 6 personnel.

Chief Bratakos mentioned that another 12 – 15 personnel will soon follow.

Chief Bratakos mentioned that future improvements will be done to the property.

Commissioner Lee asked what kind of improvements.

Chief Bratakos answered repainting, cleaning, flooring, fencing ( 6 feet; up from 3 feet) and putting a modular classroom on the property to diversify training.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned that the City's Department of Planning and Permitting had asked HFD to move out of space it occupied in the Fasi Municipal Building. Also, the department recently had a reaccreditation for recertification and this was one of the recommendations that the department needed was to house the certification department in a secured area.

Commissioner Lee asked what the cost is.

Fire Chief Neves said the cost was minimal, since the improvements were mainly painting and flooring.

Commissioner Lee asked about the modular classroom.

Chief Bratakos said under \$200,000, but explained that the fees will not come from the department's operating budget as most buildings are used for fire prevention activities and the plans review fee will cover its cost.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned the department currently trains 25 new recruits in a class due to the pandemic ( half the usual class size) .

Commissioner Hong asked about parking.

Fire Chief Neves answered there is a lot of parking. He and Chief Bratakos noted that there are 30 parking stalls, plus a grassy area for more parking.

Fire Chief Neves mentioned looking into the future this property could house a multipurpose fire station.

Chair Nagamine asked newly appointed Commissioner Nicholas Teves to introduce himself to staff.

Commissioner Teves gave some personal background, including his extensive experience as an electrical contractor and heavy work with State boards and commissions. He mentioned that this is his first appointment on the City side.

Commissioner Hong excused himself at 10:55 a.m.

## VI. ANNUAL EVALUATION OF THE FIRE CHIEF.

Vice-Chair Nekota moved and Commissioner Morton seconded that the Commission go into executive session to discuss the annual evaluation of the Fire Chief pursuant to HRS Sec. 92-5(a)(2) and Sec. 92-5(a)(4). By unanimous vote, the Commission went into executive session at 11:05 a.m. and the regular public meeting reconvened at 11:29 a.m.

Chair Nagamine asked if there were any questions. There were none.

VII. ANNOUNCEMENT: The next Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 10 a.m. in the Honolulu Fire Department Auditorium.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT: There being no other business, Commissioner Morton moved and Commissioner Lee seconded that the meeting be adjourned. By unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Nadine Murata, Secretary.

APPROVED:

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CRAIG NAGAMINE, Chair